

November 7, 2013

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND  
ENERGY CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

The Torrance Environmental Quality and Energy Conservation Commission convened in a regular session at 7:05 p.m. on Thursday, November 7, 2013 in the West Annex meeting room at Torrance City Hall.

**2. ROLL CALL:**

Present: Commissioners Deemer, DeWitt, Gobble,  
Martin, Robbins, and Chairperson Griffiths.

Absent: Commissioner Chim.

Also Present: Deputy Community Development Director Cessna,  
Senior Planner Santana, Planning Assistant Lang, and  
Environmental Quality Officer Travers.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gobble moved to grant Commissioner Chim an excused absence for the November 7, 2013 Commission meeting. Commissioner DeWitt seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**3. SALUTE TO THE FLAG**

Commissioner Martin led the Pledge of Allegiance.

**4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Robbins, seconded by Commissioner Gobble, moved to accept and file the report of the secretary on the posting of the agenda for this meeting; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval.

**5. ORAL COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE PUBLIC** None.

**6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**6A. MINUTES OF OCTOBER 3, 2013 COMMISSION MEETING**

**MOTION:** Commissioner DeWitt moved to approve the October 3, 2013 Commission meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Martin seconded the motion; a voice vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Chim).

**7. ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**7A. ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING STATIONS: RATE STRUCTURES AND ENFORCEMENT POLICIES**

Deputy Director Cessna introduced the item, noting that it was referred to the Commission by City Council at their October 8 meeting. She stated that City Council directed staff to proceed with a 50% matching grant application but decided that the RFP

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process should be deferred until the Commission analyzes issues relating to rate structure, time limits for parking, and enforcement. She stated that supplemental material was available that was received after agenda packets were prepared. She introduced Senior Planner Santana and Planning Assistant Lang who provided a presentation on Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Expansion—Rates, Time Limits, and Signage.

Senior Planner Santana reported that the two existing charging stations at the Civic Center have become extremely popular and that there is a great demand to expand the number of publicly accessible charging stations on City property. He noted that currently there are 16 sites that offer 37 operational chargers; however, only seven are accessible to the public. He stated that staff has also been looking for private projects to expand the amount of infrastructure that is available. He noted that 10 conditioned projects will be providing 45 additional chargers at locations that include Del Amo Fashion Center, Torrance Memorial Medical Center, and Little Company of Mary.

He discussed proposed placement of charging stations at various public locations throughout the City. He stated that at the City Council meeting staff proposed 10 charging stations at four public locations but that City Council directed them to apply for 14 stations at six public facilities. He noted that the locations were determined in large part through feedback received at Environmental Fairs and on-line survey responses. He noted that there was majority support for electric vehicles and that respondents suggested locations for charging sites. He shared some of the common concerns that include range anxiety, cost of electric vehicles, and equipments needed for home upgrades.

Senior Planner Santana pointed out the proposed placement of 14 charging stations in the attached Charge Station Map: Wilson Park (2), Columbia Park (2), Downtown Torrance (2), Walteria Library and Park (2), McMaster Park (2), and Civic Center (4). He showed fee rates, time limits for parking, and signage of other city models. He presented staff recommendation to provide a rate range of \$1.50 to \$3.00 per hour and rely on the RFP process to allow for viable proposals to be submitted. He also recommended a four-hour time limit, to allow continuous charge until a vehicle is removed, and signage that includes towing verbiage and staff suggested signs.

In response to Chairperson Griffiths' inquiry, Senior Planner Santana stated that the average fee for a permit for a residential charger installation is \$47, adding that 50 permits have been issued since January 2011.

Commissioner Robbins received clarification that the majority of electric vehicles can receive a full charge within four hours, with range depending on the manufacturer.

Deputy Director Cessna pointed out that a four-hour window would make it convenient for people who commute to work or to go to a play at the Cultural Arts Center.

Commissioner Gobble stated that he is encouraged to see placement of charging stations at parks and, in response to his inquiry, Senior Planner Santana advised that they would find out during the RFP process if the technology allows for reserving parking spaces and paying with credit cards.

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Commissioner DeWitt noted the high utilization rate in Torrance and expressed an interest in seeing “lessons learned” in other cities. He discussed the benefits of fast DC charging and stated that he hopes the future Transit Center will have charging stations. He expressed concern about vandalism and inquired if staff has run a business model.

Senior Planner Santana stated that private management would be responsible for installation and maintenance.

Commissioner Deemer suggested looking at the City of Los Angeles model and to consider future expansion at other libraries and high schools. He inquired about the number of residents in the South Bay who have electric cars and if there would be sufficient charging stations in the future.

Senior Planner Santana noted that they track the number of residential installations in the City but did not know the number in other jurisdictions. He stated that staff is working with South Bay Cities Council of Governments to facilitate the permitting process and that they hope to have uniform building permit application requirements and rates. He added that if they do not receive economically viable proposals they may have to engage the school district to expand the number of installation sites.

Commissioner Deemer inquired about the timeline and staff advised that the grant that they applied for on October 15 requires that infrastructure be installed and operational within 36 months of receiving the grant.

Responding to Commissioner Martin’s inquiry, Senior Planner Santana stated that they hope to be able to upgrade the existing charging stations at City Hall rather than replace them.

Commissioner Gobble initiated a brief discussion regarding the possibility of overnight use for multi-family residents and staff advised that they could investigate the suggestion if the Commission so directs.

In response to Chairperson Griffiths’ inquiries, Senior Planner Santana stated that the cost of installation is \$4,000 to \$8,000 per single charging station. He received clarification that the City will retain ownership of infrastructure and that operations would be leased to a private party. Commissioner Gobble informed him that the typical cost per hour for power being delivered with a residential charger is five cents a mile for off peak hours.

At 8:05 p.m. Chairperson Griffiths welcomed public input.

Mike McKelvey, Felker Drive, stated that he owns a Nissan Leaf and is encouraged with the proposal. He stated that he plugs his vehicle into a 115 VAC outlet and that it costs 11 cents per kilowatt hour off peak and 42 cents during peak hours. He indicated that he would support paying \$1.50 an hour for a Level 2 charging and \$3.00 for Level 3 and that he likes the four-hour time limit.

John Dowsing, Palos Verdes Estates, owner of a RAV 4 electric vehicle and 40 amp Levitron charger, stated that he pays \$40 to \$50 per month for the extra electricity. He recommended installing street signage that informs drivers where the stations are.

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Jim Montgomery, Via El Chico, owner of a RAV 4 and Nissan Leaf, recommended putting the infrastructure where people are going to spend time and money. He stated that he would support \$1.50 per hour and paying for what is consumed, adding that he would like the ability to reserve charging stations.

Mark Wich, San Fernando Valley, stated that he commutes to Torrance and pointed out that the two chargers at City Hall could easily support four parking spaces.

Senior Planner Santana agreed that it would not be expensive but that they would lose an employee parking space.

Senior Planner Santana read and entered into record a letter from resident Mike Shemesh.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Gobble moved to direct staff to complete a Request for Proposals for a minimum of 14 electric vehicle charging stations in locations as submitted and to recommend a \$1.50 to \$3.00 per hour rate structure range, a maximum four hour time limit, and to provide additional conduit infrastructure at time of installation for future expansion. Commissioner Robbins seconded the motion; a roll call vote reflected unanimous approval (absent Commissioner Chim).

Senior Planner Santana expressed his appreciation to Planning Assistant Lang for all her work on this proposal and noted that the item would probably go to City Council in January 2014.

### **8. ORAL COMMUNICATION**

**8A.** Deputy Director Cessna informed Commissioners that the Environmental Fair is scheduled to take place in June 2014 at City Yard.

**8B.** Commissioner Gobble announced a holiday light exchange at South Bay Environmental Services Center on November 18-20.

**8C.** Commissioner Deemer announced an e-waste recycling event at Trader Joes in two weeks.

### **9. ADJOURNMENT**

**MOTION:** At 8:48 p.m., Commissioner Deemer moved to adjourn the meeting to December 5, 2013 at 7:00 p.m. in the West Annex meeting room. Commissioner Gobble seconded the motion and, hearing no objection, Chairperson Griffiths so ordered.

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Approved as submitted February 6, 2014 s/ Sue Herbers, City Clerk
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